

Water Talks Series, 2nd Edition

The Geneva Water Hub – Education & Knowledge Component – is proud to welcome you to the 2nd edition of the Water Talk Series, on Wednesday 13 January, 19:00 and 22:30, RTS building, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, in Geneva.

This series is an open-speech opportunity for researchers to expose and explain their ideas, their stances on contemporary challenges linked to water governance.

The presentations, in English and in French, will be short and impactful. Following the discussions, our guests will have the opportunity to share their thoughts around drinks and snacks.

For this second edition, we will have the pleasure of welcome the following speakers:

Prof. Frances Cleaver



Professor of Human Geography at the University of Sheffield, UK, her research interests focus on understanding the everyday ways that institutions work to shape the processes and outcomes of water governance, particularly at the local level. She has been developing the idea of institutional bricolage to explain why many

local institutions (like waterpoint committees or water user associations) are hybrid arrangements which incorporate elements of tradition, practical norms and power relationships, as well as elements derived from bureaucratic models and state driven development. Working from an inter-disciplinary base in international development studies she is interested in how improved understandings of these issues can inform interventions for progressive social change. Currently leading the social science elements of a multi-partner consortium project 'Hidden Crisis: unraveling current failures for future success in rural groundwater supply' which is being implemented with WaterAid and other partners (cf. <http://bit.ly/1t8SLJ3>).

Adaptive Water Governance: the Promises and Pitfalls of Institutional Bricolage

In this presentation I explore the idea that institutions for local water governance are shaped more by processes of bricolage (the piecing together of arrangements from the materials at hand) than by design. Drawing on examples from Tanzania and Zimbabwe I show that institutions formed through bricolage are dynamic, adaptive and fit their local context. However, they may also be inefficient and inequitable and intermittent. I discuss the dilemmas that this poses for development agencies and their planned interventions.

Presentation in English.

Dr. Manuel Fischer



Researcher at the Department of Environmental Social Sciences at the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag), and lecturer at the Institute of Political Science at the University of Bern. Dr. Fischer studies complex policymaking processes, policy networks and new institutional arrangements, with a focus

on water and environmental policy. His methodological expertise include qualitative comparative analysis and network analysis (more at <http://bit.ly/1MgSsoi>).

Water Policymaking: Three Challenges to Policy Analysis

The analysis of water policymaking involves many complex elements, which pose new challenges to traditional approaches to policy analysis. My talk will address three types of innovative theoretical and conceptual approaches to deal with the complexity of water-related issues. First, water-related issues transcend many different policy sectors such as energy, agricultural, environmental or infrastructure policy. Water policy analysis thus need to be able to take into account overlapping policy sectors. Second, traditional institutions of policymaking have a hard time dealing with water-related issues, which need the inclusion of a broad set of stakeholders and scientists. Understanding the functioning of new, informal and horizontally organized policy forums is thus crucial. Third, the successful management of water and environmental issues crucially depends on how actors relate to these natural resources, both in terms of regulation and use of the resources. We thus need to assess how governance structures fit to resource structures in so-called socio-ecological networks.

Presentation in English.

Prof. Margreet Zwarteveen



Professor of Water Governance at UNESCO-IHE and the University of Amsterdam. Approaching water governance from perspectives of equity and justice, she defines water governance as the practices of coordination and decision making between different actors around contested water distributions. She is concerned both with looking at actual water distribution practices and with analyzing the different ways in which water distributions can be regulated (through technologies, markets and institutions), justified (decision making procedures) and understood (expertise and knowledge). Her work is based on an interdisciplinary approach that sees water distributions as interactions between technology, nature and society (more at <http://bit.ly/1Nx7AbB>).

Water Distribution and Globalization

Questions about how to distribute water more equitably, sustainably and efficiently are becoming ever more urgent because of dwindling supplies and growing demands. Yet, and paradoxically, proposed solutions - because of a combination of marketization, globalization and the ascribing of scarcity to natural causes - tend to make the question of distribution disappear. I propose a mode of engaging with water that makes its distributions - and the organizations of society these assume and produce - more central. Instead of generic and often normative orderings, I suggest that studies of everyday practices provide a fruitful starting point for generating insight into how water distributions happen. This can inform new, more modest ways of developing water expertise: ways that are sensitive to how knowledge is always situated, concept- dependent and therefore political and that acknowledge that proposed solutions are often provisional, messy and negotiated.

Presentation in English

This 2nd edition of the Water Talks will start at 19:00, but doors will open at 18:30. They will take place at the RTS building, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, in Geneva (access map). Plainpalais underground parking is the closest. Free entrance. However, seating space is limited, we therefore ask you to register at the following page genevawaterhub.org/water-talks2-reg before 11 January 2016. Priority will be given in order of registration.

Prof. Géraldine Pflieger



Professeure associée en politiques urbaines et de l'environnement à l'Université de Genève (Département de science politique et relations internationales et Institut des sciences de l'environnement) et directrice du Pôle/Institut en Gouvernance de l'Environnement et Développement Territorial (P/IGEDT). Elle est titulaire de la Chaire UNESCO en hydropolitiques. Ses travaux de recherche portent sur la régulation des ressources naturelles partagées (principalement l'eau et le sol) - aux échelles internationales, régionales et locales. (more at <http://bit.ly/1JbNzFL>).

Territorialités en conflit pour la gouvernance de l'eau

Si les tensions et conflits sont nombreux entre Etats pour la gestion et le partage des ressources en eau, des tensions tout aussi fortes mais sans doute plus discrètes émergent entre différentes approches territoriales de la gouvernance de l'eau. Depuis le XIXe siècle, la doctrine Harmon a pu prévaloir, reconnaissant à chaque Etat une souveraineté pleine et entière sur les ressources en eau et les encourageant à coopérer pour prévenir les conflits. Mais, depuis la seconde moitié du XXe siècle, on note que trois grands types de territorialités entrent en tension et ce de façon croissante :

- Ce que nous qualifions d'hyper-territorialisation tout d'abord avec la relance de stratégies extractives des Etats et le retour de nationalismes hydriques sur tous les continents. Cette tendance est corrélée à l'élévation du stress hydrique et au changement climatique qui rend la ressource plus vulnérable et plus rare ;
- L'affirmation d'une néo-territorialisation de la ressource et de l'importance d'une gestion à l'échelle de systèmes hydriques ou de bassins versant qui transcende les limites des espaces institutionnels classiques. C'est l'émergence de syndicats de gestion, d'instances de bassin, d'organismes transfrontaliers de coordination, sous l'influence de corporations d'ingénieurs ou d'organisations environnementales qui mettent en exergue l'intérêt de dépasser une gouvernance fragmentée de la ressource et le besoin d'entités politiques spécifiques de gestion de la ressource.
- L'émergence d'un processus de post-territorialisation de la ressource qui se traduit par l'approfondissement d'une gouvernance globale de l'eau, à l'échelle planétaire. L'ambition d'une gouvernance globale de l'eau renforcée est de reconnaître à l'eau le statut de ressource planétaire (au même titre que l'atmosphère ou la biodiversité) et à promouvoir une gouvernance approfondie qui supprime les intérêts des Etats.

Ces trois grandes modalités de territorialisation reposent la question de l'échelle légitime de gouvernance de l'eau et nous montrent que les changements environnementaux globaux qui pèsent sur la ressource n'amènent pas seulement à l'approfondissement des tensions entre Etats mais également à une nouvelle géopolitique des échelles de gouvernance de la ressource.

Presentation in French.